



**Bedford**  
Center of Excellence  
Director: Dan R. Berlowitz, MD, MPH,  
**Executive Summary for Fiscal Year 2008**

The Center for Health Quality, Outcomes & Economic Research (CHQOER), a VA HSR&D Center of Excellence located at the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital, Bedford, Massachusetts was established on November 1, 1990. FY2008 was a notable year for CHQOER with continued growth in its research program and the development of new academic ties. Historically, the Bedford VAMC has been a Boston University Dean's Committee Hospital, and the Center has linked its structure, operations and research themes with the health services research expertise present at Boston University, and especially with the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Boston University School of Public Health. This past year, a new academic affiliation was developed with the University of Massachusetts Medical School and strong collaborations are developing with its Department of Psychiatry. As evidence of this new affiliation, David Smelson, PsyD, a senior VA HSR&D researcher was jointly recruited to develop a VA research program in translational mental health and serve as Vice Chair for Clinical Research within the University of Massachusetts Medical School Psychiatry Department.

The CHQOER research mission continues to focus on three main priority areas, each led by a senior investigator. These include patient-centered care led by Susan Eisen, PhD, patient safety led by Amy Rosen, PhD, and medication effectiveness led by Lewis Kazis, ScD. New VA research funding has been obtained in each of these areas. Additionally, the Center focus on implementation remains strong with CHQOER Associate Director Allen Gifford, MD, also serving as the co-Director of the QUERI-HIV/Hepatitis and David Smelson, PsyD, developing a program to implement best practices in veterans with mental health and substance abuse disorders. As evidence of the growing strength of the research program, overall FY2008 Center funding increased by 50% from \$4.2 million in FY2007 to \$6.3 million.

CHQOER has continued to recruit new faculty to work in these priority areas. In addition to Dr. Smelson, Stephanie Shimada, PhD, has joined the faculty to work in the area of patient safety and Adam Rose, MD, is developing a research portfolio in medication effectiveness. Both of these junior investigators are graduates of the CHQOER training programs. Their emergence as independent faculty is evidence of the strengths of the CHQOER post-doctoral training programs. This year, two new HSR&D post-doctoral fellows have also been recruited. Additional recruitments of clinician-investigators are underway.

A particular focus of CHQOER in the past year was in expanding its pool of Career Development Awardees. This was successful with Adam Rose, MD, receiving an award to study the quality of anticoagulation care. Four additional CHQOER junior faculty will be submitting applications in the coming year.

Efforts at restructuring CHQOER over the past several years have been highly successful. Local support for the program from the Medical Center and VISN remains strong and new FTEs were available to support expansion of the research program. CHQOER is now well-positioned for an exceptional FY2009.